



13 February 2020

Answers to clarification requests received by interested parties

Call for project proposals OP_UP2_ii 1_2020_1 – Article 47 of EMFF Regulation [EU] 508/2014

1. What is being understood by ‘scientific or technical bodies’?

Any EMFF support given in the aquaculture sector can only be granted where it has been clearly demonstrated in an independent marketing report that good and sustainable market prospects exist for the product. Any scientific or technical body [public or private] who are essentially experts in the field of aquaculture, needs to be recognised by the Member State and be in compliance with the National Strategy for Aquaculture. The independent character of such validation report should be ensured and proved by not involving any potential beneficiaries into the conduct, elaboration or financing of the report itself. It is pertinent to note that the results of the operation receiving support should be publicised by the Member State; hence it is suggested that the applicant needs to establish a contact with DFA to get a letter of understanding or Memorandum of Understanding – ideally this is presented with the Application Form.

2. Is there a specific legal form which they should have? Or would any undertaking qualify?

It can be either a public or private body.

3. How is validation expected to occur? Are there specific guidelines as to the rigour of the validation exercise?

No specific guidelines are established, and it is up to the project proponent to prove that the exercise will be sufficiently thorough that it fulfils the objectives of Article 47.

4. What is the aid intensity?

For public bodies, the aid intensity will be of 75% EU funds and 25% national funds. Meanwhile, for private ones shall amount to 50% EU/national funds and 50% private funds. If the applicant falls beyond the scope of SMEs, aid intensity will be reduced by 20% as per Article 95 and Annex 1 of the Fund-specific Regulation.

5. Validation of operations mentioned in Article 47 can take a dual form – both technical and marketwise. For example: [i] if an applicant decides to focus on Bluefin Tuna, there will be sure market prospects, but no possibility of obtaining technical success in a closed-cycle environment since such a fish can currently only be ranched [caught in the wild and fattened in a farm]; [ii] differently, if an applicant decides to focus on the meagre [gurbell], there will be a big possibility of technical success in a closed-cycle environment given past experiences with this species, but little market opportunities. Hence in this regard, must validation take into account both technical and market aspects? If yes, it may well be the case that two different collaborators will be needed to tackle the technical validation on one hand and the market validation on the other, given that they are two separate domains.

The project can address points [a], [b] or [c]. Hence the expert/s should be professional according to the operation selected. The Project Selection Committee reserves the right to ask for the CVs or experience/expertise of the selected validator.

6. If research results in negative outcomes, will it still be co-financeable? In the case of Horizon 2020, such outcomes are allegedly financeable. Research always bears the risk of not yielding the desired results.



It depends on the operation. I assume that 'research' will be financed under Point 1 [c]. In this case, the researcher would need to validate the results [whether negative or positive] of the research financed. Having said this, the Managing Authority would like to finance positive research and the project applicant is encouraged to submit proposals which could reap positive results.

7. Can the technical validation be carried out by an individual [natural] person with recognised academic knowledge in the field and years of experience in the aquaculture sector? This question is being asked since the Regulation makes reference to 'public or private scientific or technical bodies'.

The answer is yes but the Project Selection Committee reserves the right to ask for the necessary documents to validate the expertise.

8. Clarification requested during the information meeting [13 February 2020] with regards to the bank guarantee mentioned in Section 18 of the Application Form.

The bank guarantee providing evidence that costs can be supported following termination of the grant is listed as 'if applicable'. Hence, a declaration from a certified accountant or the enterprise's bank will also serve this purpose.

9. Clarification requested during the information meeting [13 February 2020] with regards to procurement by private enterprises.

Three comparable quotations need to be submitted for each proposed line item. Upon acceptance, the Managing Authority shall finance the cheapest quotation. At application stage, one quotation for each line item will suffice – the remaining two will be formally requested at a later stage if the project is selected by the pertinent Project Selection Committee.

10. Clarification requested during the information meeting [13 February 2020] with regards to the eligibility or otherwise of private companies providing ancillary services to aquaculture enterprises.

Article 46 [1] of the Fund-specific Regulation states that 'Support in this Chapter shall be limited to aquaculture enterprises, unless otherwise stated in this Regulation.'

As per Council Regulation [EU] 1308/2013, aquaculture is defined as: 'rearing or cultivation of aquatic organisms using techniques designed to increase the production of the organisms in question beyond the natural capacity of the environment, where the organisms remain the property of a natural or legal person throughout the rearing and culture stage, up to and including harvesting.'

Meanwhile, the Commission's definition of enterprises is as follows: 'enterprise is considered to be any entity engaged in an economic activity, irrespective of its legal form. This includes in particular self-employed persons and family businesses engaged in craft or other activities, and partnerships or associations regularly engaged in an economic activity.'

Therefore, applicants must fulfil both the definition of 'aquaculture' and 'enterprise' as delineated above.

11. Clarification requested during the information meeting with regards to the revenue generation threshold.

This project cost threshold is set at €1 million as per sub-section 8.1.2 of the Application Form.

MINISTERU GHALL-AFFARIJJIET BARRANIN
U EWROPEJ

SEGRETARJAT PARLAMENTARI
GHALL-FONDI EWROPEJ



MALTA

MINISTRY FOR FOREIGN AND EUROPEAN
AFFAIRS

PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARIAT
FOR EUROPEAN FUNDS

Id-Divizjoni għall-Fondi u Programmi

Funds and Programmes Division



Maritime and Fisheries Operational Programme 2014-2020
Part-financed by the European Union
European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF)
Co-financing rate: 75% European Union funds; 25% national
funds



Investing in sustainable fisheries and aquaculture